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## CURRENT SUPPORT BRIEF

USSR ANNOUNCES "SCIENTIFIC" CONSUMPTION NORMS

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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USSR ANNOUNCES "SCIENTIFIC" CONSUMPTION NORMS

The USSR has recently published "scientific norms" for the consumption per capita of food, textiles, clothing, and leather footwear by the Soviet population. 1/ As distinct from plan goals, these norms state what the Soviet consumer ought to consume annually to "completely satisfy his needs" and set no specific date for their attainment. The norms call for levels of consumption per capita about the same as those now current in the US and most of them represent long term objectives which have little prospect of being attained within the next decade.

During the past year Khrushchev has spoken in glowing terms of the USSR's catching up with the US in production per capita by 1970 or sooner which he claims will ensure for the Soviet worker "the world's highest standard of living." He contends that by 1970 the USSR will have achieved "the complete satisfaction of the needs of all the Soviet people" in food and clothing. Khrushchev has been careful to make clear, however, that he is referring not to whims or desires for luxuries but to the "healthy requirements of a culturally developed man" as determined "scientifically" by the Soviet government. 2/

Food Norms

The average Soviet consumer now consumes about 3,200 calories per day, a level about the same as that in the US. His diet, however, is largely one of bread and potatoes, and in terms of calories obtained from animal products compared to total calories consumed, is similar to that of Italy and is well below that of the US and the UK, France, and West Germany. The recently published food norms for specific products, according to an informal statement by a Soviet official, are based on 1953 standards published by the Food and Nutrition Board of the US National Research Council. 3/ Attainment of these norms will require little change in the total number of calories consumed per capita, but will require a large increase in consumption per capita of animal products and a corresponding reduction in consumption per capita of bread and potatoes. The norms call for a ratio of calories of animal origin to total calories consumed of about 40 percent, approximately the ratio current in the US, whereas the present ratio is estimated at 15-20 percent.

Achievement of the food output goals of the Seven-Year Plan (1959-65) would bring the Soviet consumer close to attainment of these norms--consumption per capita of many individual products would be equal to or above the norms and the ratio of calories of animal origin to total calories consumed would be increased to close to 30 percent. However, we believe that agricultural output, unless above-plan resources are committed to agriculture, probably will achieve only about one-third of the implied plan growth. Such a major underfulfillment could result in a prolonged postponement of the attainment of the norms.

Norms for Textiles, Clothing, and Leather Footwear

Soviet consumption per capita of textiles, clothing, and leather footwear, although increasing at a rapid rate, is now roughly comparable to that of Poland and is well below that of the US and of the UK, France, and West Germany. The new norms, which provide for family inventories and annual purchases expressed per capita, were prepared during 1957-58 by Gosplan, the Institute of Economics of the USSR Academy of Science, and various industrial research institutes. The norms for annual purchases are similar to present consumption per capita in the US but entail a different distribution by type of fabric, reflecting in part differences in fabric classification and in climate.

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The norms are well above the levels implied by the 1965 output goals of the Seven-Year Plan and can not be achieved even by 1970 unless the rates of growth of output of these products are stepped up sharply. For example, the norms for annual consumption of wool and linen fabrics and for knitwear provide for a level of consumption per capita nearly double output per capita now planned for 1965.

Consumer Durable Goods

Although norms for automobiles and other consumer durable goods have not been published, they are now in preparation. 4/ Numerous statements by Khrushchev indicate that the norms for automobiles and for many home appliances such as washers, sewing machines, and cooking ranges, will be substantially below present stocks or annual consumption per capita in the US. Khrushchev has stated that it is far more economical and ideologically correct for the USSR to construct public service facilities such as taxi pools for transportation and rental-centers for home appliances rather than attempt to supply each family with its own automobile, washer, or sewing machine. In addition, the regime is encouraging the use of public "housekeeping" facilities such as restaurants equipped with facilities for preparing "carry out" meals. The emphasis on increasing the use of public facilities is reflected in newly constructed apartments in the USSR, most of which are too small to accommodate many major appliances.

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Table 1

Comparison of Soviet Food Consumption Norms with Estimated Soviet Consumption Per Capita, 1958, 1965, and with 1957 US Consumption Per Capita a/

Products	Units Per Year	1958-59		1965-66		USSR Norm e/	US Consumption 1957 f/
		Official Data b/	<del>GRR</del> Estimate	Official Data b/	<del>GRR</del> Estimate		
Meat c/	Kilogram	38	23	69	27	73-91	92
Milk c/	Kilogram	279	222	444	285	292-585	335
Eggs	Units	114	114	160	160	180-365	358
Fish d/	Kilogram	9.8	9.8	14	12	7-16	4.6
Bread and related products in terms of flour	Kilogram	N.A.	193	N.A.	164	118-160	67
Potatoes	Kilogram	N.A.	174	N.A.	160	55-219	50
Sugar	Kilogram	26	26	43	34	27-33	41
Vegetables	Kilogram	68	68	160	95	110-137	74
Vegetable oil d/	Kilogram	5.8	5.8	8.3	7.3	4-8	11
Ratio of calories from animal products to total calories consumed	Percent	20	17	30	21	39	42

- a. Human consumption without adjustment for change in inventories.  
b. 5/.  
c. USSR official data for 1958-59 and 1965-66 includes edible products which are not counted in the US data on consumption per capita. Therefore, USSR official data are comparable with USSR norms. ~~GRR~~ estimates have been adjusted for comparability with US data on consumption per capita.  
d. USSR official data have been adjusted to eliminate non-food uses.  
e. The norms are expressed in the form of ranges to reflect regional variations within the USSR 6/.  
f. 7/.

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Table 2

Comparison of Soviet Consumption Norms for Textiles, Clothing,  
and Leather Footwear with Estimated Soviet Consumption Per Capita,  
1958 and 1965 and with 1958 US Consumption Per Capita

Product	Units Per Year	USSR Consumption Norms c/				US Consumption Per Capita 1958 d/
		1958 Consumption a/	1965 Production Per Capita b/	Inventory	Annual Purchases	
Cotton e/ Wool e/	Sq. meters Sq. meters	21 1.9	26 2.7	76 20	37 5.2	48 2.5
Silk, rayon, and synthetic e/	Sq. meters	5.2	7.8	15	10	12
Linen e/	Sq. meters	2.6	3.0	12	5.9	Neg.
Leather footwear	Pairs	1.8	2.2	N.A.	3.5	3.4
Knit underwear	Units	1.9	3.4	N.A.	6.6	N.A.
Knit outerwear	Units	0.5	0.7	N.A.	1.6	N.A.

- a. Production plus imports minus exports. 8/  
b. 9/  
c. 10/  
d. Production plus imports minus exports. 11/  
e. Includes linens and sewn clothing in terms of their fabric content.

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Sources:

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6. USSR. Sovetskaya Torgovliya, op. cit.
7. UN Statistical Yearbook, 1958, New York, 1958. U.  
US Statistical Abstracts of the US, 1959, Washington, 1959, p. 85. U.
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